

**Kessler, Ellen**

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**From:** Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC [Stephanie.Strength@wdc.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 14, 2009 8:32 AM  
**To:** Lilley, Bliss  
**Cc:** Collins, Carly  
**Subject:** FW: More CapX2020 information...  
**Attachments:** scott ek letter.doc

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From: Mrsprchal@aol.com [mailto:Mrsprchal@aol.com]  
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2009 11:04 AM  
To: Strength, Stephanie - Washington, DC  
Subject: More CapX2020 information...

Please see attached...thanks much.

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**B-009-001**

This federal scoping process is specific to only the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345-kV project. As such, we have forwarded you comments to the project team dealing with the project with which you have raised concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be available on the RUS website at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be solicited after its publication.

Docket ET-2/TL-08-1474

April 14, 2009

Dear Mr. Scott Ek and the PUC,

I am writing regarding Section 15 and 16 of Lanesburg Township, in addition to the area west and east of these sections, particularly where the route begins cutting cross country from 300<sup>th</sup> St to 141<sup>st</sup> Ave. I am highly disappointed that the proposed line would be cutting through prime agricultural land when from day one of learning about this project this was one of the top concerns of the CapX2020 group. Following road right of ways was going to be a priority for this project, we were told. In addition this also impacts a number of homes that are close to the line as well, including daycares and many children who live and play near these lines.

I cannot even describe what emotional toll this is taking on the people of this area. This area is being impacted not only because of their homes but their agricultural businesses as well. Although they may not be out there with a suit and a tie, this is their BUSINESS!

How may this impact our business and those around us?

1. Compaction of soil is a great concern. When semis, excavators, cement trucks, cranes are all running over the land there is going to be compaction. In fact there are places that the mere buffalo trails can still be found and are still compacted to this day. Imagine what all of this equipment is going to do to the ground where a tiny seed needs to send out a sprout. A sprout means a crop and a crop means money for the farmer which means an impact on our BUSINESS. Who will be responsible for soil that is so compacted it will take many , many years ,if ever to get that yield back to where it was before this project?

2. Tile Breakage is another big worry. Running all through these fields are tiles that help to properly drain these fields. Large equipment can crack or break them. This may not be realized for years. Putting these tiles in was not cheap. Checking them to make sure they didn't get damaged costs money as well. And I cannot imagine the cost to replace them. This should be of great concern not only on our farmland but those east and west of us as well. Who will be responsible to make sure that tiles were not cracked or damaged and if they were who will pay for it? If the fields don't properly drain this means wet areas that can't be planted as soon as they could have, it means areas that remain wet or drowning long after they would have ,which means loss of crop which means loss of money which makes a negative impact on our BUSINESS.

3. Maintenance of the lines/poles: This is not just a one time deal. The building of this alone would be detrimental enough but now think about the future. I have to believe that these lines and poles will be subject to inspection and repair in the future. So now the soil has been compacted, tile lines may be damaged and land was taken away but this will never quit. It will forever go on. It can be said maintenance would be done in the winter but problems could occur anytime, even when the crops are growing. Who will be responsible if growing crops get damaged?

4. Working around poles: While I respect the fact that these are single pole structures, it is still a big obstacle for large equipment to try to maneuver around. Where once the

farmer could plant straight rows, now every row will be impacted due to the obstacles in the way. This is not just a minor inconvenience. If you are going around things you are wasting seed. And seed costs money to the tune of \$250 a bag in some cases. Now add the cost of extra fertilizer, chemical spray and time. It all adds up. This is not an exaggeration. This is real. Getting up and down off of the tractor to put the booms up and down to get around these poles is something we didn't have to do before and this is not just for one pole, it would be the entire length of the fields and for everyone across this area. Time is precious and valuable.

5. Now that this project has so negatively impacted the business aspect let's think about the human aspect. What was once an enjoyable time of planting and harvesting for generations working together for a common good (we have 3 generations working together in the field), we now have lines to be under and poles to work around. Depression is real and this project will be the root cause of it. As a mom I would not allow my children to ride in the tractors and the combine near these lines and since this affects pretty much the entire portion of the farm then their dreams have been crushed. We spend a lot of time running up and down the entire field picking rocks with a 4 wheeler. The kids actually enjoy this but having them under these lines is a risk I cannot expose them to. Who will be responsible for the emotional aspects that people will now experience?

6. Damage to farm equipment: Many times work must be done in the dark if there is a time factor involved during planting or harvesting. There is large equipment that is hard to turn. Trying to get around these poles without catching equipment is a big concern. In addition when plows are being used in the ground, there is a possibility of catching the cement pad under the pole. The costs of repairs are astronomical. Who will be liable for this if the operator is doing the best they can but an accident happens?

7. Huge metal grain bins with electrical motors for aeration, a corn dryer with electrical parts, old metal sheds, older tractors and combines which need chains behind them, electric fences that may stay on all the time..these are all real concerns. To get an electrician to come in and make sure things are properly grounded would be more expense for our business. This would not be cheap to get it checked, let alone to get it fixed. Who would be responsible for this bill since this is something that we would not have had to worry about prior to this proposed project? Who purchases the chains for each tractor? What if we have to cover a wet bin when an approaching electrical storm is coming, which has had to be done before? Who will want to climb up there and possibly be electrocuted? It may sound minor to those who want this project to go through but they are nonetheless real to us who will have to live with it FOREVER!

8. If this project is truly needed (which I am still opposed to due to lack of enough studies) then alternatives that should be highly considered and not dismissed due to length or cost should be:

- a. Put the entire line underground: this would eliminate so much of the opposition and in the long run may be just as cost effective. Studies should be done to make it a more

viable option. Perhaps with more research this could be done. This would also eliminate the visual fear factor of making us targets for terrorists and the entire EMF fear.

b. Follow road right of ways and then bury the line in sensitive areas where there are organic farms or highly populated areas close to the road. This would be more of a give and take type approach for CapX instead of just a taking approach.

c. Follow 190 and 35W. This should not be dismissed. There is already existing right of ways and the impact to homeowners would be minimal since there are not many homes on a freeway and if there are, they are further back. The amount of land needlessly taken from hard working people would be minimal. The complaints those landowners are going to have will never end either. Staying on a freeway would decrease the impact to a large portion of the state of Minnesota and make this project more user friendly in the eyes of everyone.

In closing, I just want to say that the PUC should be looking out for all of us. We all work hard to get where we are. We have emotional and family ties to the places that could be destroyed forever while we try to do our part by recycling and conserving energy. Please consider this project carefully and take into account the number of lives being affected due to one project.

Submitted by Daniel and Jodi Prchal and their children in care of Czech Country Farms  
30901 State Hwy 13 New Prague MN 56071. 952-758-4213.